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## An Interesting Correspondence

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confederates and confined in prison something over a year. Shortly after the United States government acquired the Philippine Islands he was sent into those waters with the largest fleet ever commanded by an American sailor. Admiral Remey since his retirement has resided in Washington, D. C. The other portrait is that of Rear-Admiral John Grimes Walker. He was also a resident of Burlington and a nephew of the late Gov. James W. Grimes. He, too, was educated at Annapolis and served after his graduation in the American Navy until he reached the age of retirement. When, in 1850, he received his appointment to the United States Naval Academy, it was the first and only appointment from Iowa. So he became the first and only representative at that time from our State in the Navy. He served as President of the Isthmian Canal Commission and recently President Roosevelt placed him at the head of the Panama Commission, an appointment of great importance. He is a man of large ability who has rendered the country the most conspicuous services. His portrait is now being painted by Hinckley, a distinguished Washington artist. We are certain that these two portraits of our distinguished Iowa sailors will be heartily appreciated by the people of the State.

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#### AN INTERESTING CORRESPONDENCE.

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The following letters very fully explain themselves. They were kindly presented to the editor of THE ANNALS, for the "Aldrich Collection" in the State Historical Rooms, by Gen. G. M. Dodge. The letter by Gen. Robert E. Lee shows the affectionate and fatherly characteristics of that great soldier. It is not probable that it has ever been published, and we are pleased to make it a matter of record in these pages:

No. 1 Broadway, New York,  
April 24, 1897.

DEAR GENERAL DODGE: As the Senior Corps Commander now alive among the many gallant gentlemen and soldiers who took part in the time that tried men, I enclose to you a letter of Gen. Robert E. Lee, written 36 years ago or about the time that the troubles between the States took place. To an antiquarian it would be prized very much, not alone because it came from Gen. Lee, but it showed the man, if in only one thing. You can never find an order or letter of Gen. Lee's wherein he ever used the word *Yankeé*, but those people, or the Federal troops, not even in the history of his life. The Fitz which he mentions was his son, later on Gen. W. H. Fitzhugh Lee, now dead, the Col. W. was Col. John A. Washington, the owner of Mt. Vernon, who was killed on his staff in the same campaign, and the Capt. L. was afterwards Gen. Armstead Long who married the daughter of Maj. Gen. Sumner, United States Army. Long was an old Army Officer also; his wife is now post mistress at Charlottesville, Va. She is a sister of Col. Sumner, 6th Cavalry, United States Army now. I knew them all. Gen. George Washington Custis Lee, the son of Gen. Lee and great grand-son of Gen. Washington, sent me this letter 20 odd years ago. Kindly accept the same with my kind wishes, as I know of no one whom I would like to have it more than you, and also allow me to show my appreciation of your many kind courtesies to me. With kind wishes and long life.

Truly your friend,

GEN. G. M. DODGE.

WILLIAM CROCKER DUXBURY.

VALLEY MT., 3 Sept., 1861.

MY DEAR SON: I was very glad to receive your letter of the 27<sup>th</sup> ulto., and to learn something of your whereabouts. I did not know what had become of you and was very anxious to learn. You say nothing of your health and I will hope you are well and able to do good service to the cause so dear to us all. I trust you may be able to get a position and field agreeable to you and know that wherever you may be placed you will do your duty. That is all the pleasure, all the comfort, all the glory we can enjoy in this world. I have been able to do but little here. Still, I hope I have been of some service. Things are better organized. I feel stronger, we are stronger. The three routes leading East are guarded. The men have more confidence, our people a feeling of security. The enemy has been driven back and made to haul in his horns, and to find he cannot have everything his own way. This has been done without a battle but by a steady advance of positions. Now to drive him farther, a battle must come off, and I am anxious to begin it. Circumstances beyond human control delays it, I know for good, but I hope the great ruler of the universe will continue to aid and prosper us and crown at last our feeble efforts with success. Rain, rain, rain, there has been nothing but rain, it has appeared to my anxious mind, since I approached these

mountains. It commenced before, but since has come down with a will. The cold too has been greater than I could have conceived. In my winter clothing, and buttoned up in my overcoat, I have still been cold. This state of weather has aggravated the sickness that has attacked the whole army, measles and typhoid. Some regiments have not over 250 for duty, some 300, 500, or about half, according to its strength. This makes a terrible hole in our effectives. Do not mention this I pray you. It will be in the papers next. The rains and constant travel have cut these dirt turnpikes so deep, the soil being rich mould in most part, that wagons can only travel with double teams. But there is a change in the weather. The glorious sun has been shining these four days. The drowned earth is reviving. The sick improving and the spirits of all rising. Fitzhugh is very anxious to get his Buffalo robe. Did you ever get my letter concerning it? It was directed to be sent to the Spottswood to me. I asked you to put it up securely and get Col. Myers to send it to me at Huntersville. I have heard nothing of it. F. feels the want of it every night. He is very well, hearty, and sanguine. I am glad to hear of Gen. A. S. Johnston's approach, and Capt. Garnett's arrival. The disaster at Cape Hatteras was a hard blow to us, but we must expect them, struggle against them, prepare for them. We cannot be always successful, and reverses must come. May God give us courage, endurance, and faith to strive to the end.

Good bye my dear son. F. has just come in. He sends his love and Col. W. and Capt. L. their regards. Give my kind remembrances to everybody.

Your fond father,

CAPT. G. W. CUSTIS LEE.

R. E. LEE.

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### SOME NOTES ON THE ENGLISH SPARROW.

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The first is wholly in their favor. On many damp spring mornings they have been noticed busily at work on the lawn surrounding the State House at Des Moines. Pausing on these occasions to see what they were doing, one quickly perceived that they were picking up little black cut-worms which seemed to be very plenty everywhere on the capitol grounds. These cut-worms were not far from three-fourths of an inch in length. A warm rain or a heavy dew brings them to the surface. It is then that scores of sparrows are so intent upon picking up and eating the pests that they scarcely notice a person who passes along the walks. Among the many things said and written about the sparrows this fact may be set down to their credit.

The next fact to be noticed is to the credit of two certain other birds (if it be creditable to destroy these little "gamins," as the late Dr. Elliott Coues used to call them. To him the house sparrow was simply an abomination, with few or no redeeming characteristics.) The birds which are destroying the sparrows are the screech owls (*Megascops asio*) and the sparrow hawks (*Falco sparverius*). During the autumn of 1901 two spar-

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